

Marriner Eccles to Congressmen: U.S. Guilty of Aggression in Viet

MARRINER S. ECCLES, in a letter he sent to every Congressman, declared last week that the U.S. is in Vietnam "as an aggressor in violation of our treaty obligations under the UN charter."

Eccles was a prominent economic adviser to President Roosevelt and a chairman of the Federal Reserve Board. He has also been a member of the National Advisory Council on International Monetary and Financial Problems and the advisory board of the Export-Import Bank.

Eccles' letter follows:

Under no circumstance should we escalate the war in Vietnam. Our position there is indefensible. Contrary to government propaganda, we were not invited by and have no commitment to any representative or responsible government of South Vietnam. We are there as an aggressor in violation of our treaty obligation under the United Nations Charter. We have not observed either the letter or the spirit of our obligations with respect to our actions in Vietnam. As a result, we have the opposition of not only the entire Communist world but the rest of the world as well, with few minor exceptions.

The facts are, the Geneva Treaty of 1954, after the defeat of the French, affirmed the independence of the colonial government of Vietnam and called for an end to hostilities. The British and the Russians were co-chairmen of that conference. An interim trusteeship was agreed upon whereby the French would preside in the South and the Viet Minh in the North for two years, ending in a national election in 1956 when the Vietnamese people would choose their own government.

ELECTION BARRED

The U.S. Vietnam Lobby did not permit that election to be held, knowing that the Communist leader of the North, was so popular he would

unquestionably win the election. As a matter of fact, John F. Kennedy, then Senator, in a major speech in the Senate in April, 1954, warned against any negotiated solution that would allow participation in the Vietnamese government by Ho Chi Minh. The Communists, he said, would eventually take over because they were so popular. In his memoirs Eisenhower stated that had an election been held in Vietnam, as provided in the Geneva accord, an estimated 80 percent would have voted for Communist Ho Chi Minh as their leader.

Diem was brought to the United States in 1950 from a 17-year self-imposed exile, under



ECCLES

the auspices of Michigan State University, and here he found strong support in the hierarchy of the Catholic Church, his brother being a Catholic Bishop. Cardinal Spellman became a strong supporter, also Justice Douglas, Joseph Kennedy and his son, John F. Kennedy; General Lansdale (the CIA man in Saigon), CIA Director Allen Dulles, General Donovan and other strong anti-Communists. They were largely responsible for bringing about Diem's ascen-

sion to the Premiership of South Vietnam in July 1954.

SUPPRESSION

From his first day in office he set about crushing opposition and concentrating power in small nepotist groups. Diem's targets included the private armies of the religious sects and the anti-Communist Vietnamese leaders, who were anti-Diem.

He wasn't looking for popularity. He knew his support was slim — that he would have trouble with the majority of the population who had been supporting the Viet Minh in the long war against the French; therefore, force was the only way he could effectively ready his people for the democratic alternative.

Due to the paid propaganda of the U.S. Vietnam Lobby his dictatorial tactics were not widely reported in the American press until eight years later when he fell from power and he and his brother were assassinated by the military within his own government. Since that time South Vietnam has been unable to develop a stable or responsible government, as evidenced by the many changes in leadership.

The South Vietnamese Communists, with the help of the North Vietnamese, defeated the French. They are now fighting for the independence of their country against the non-Communist South Vietnamese. In short, it is a civil war with the Viet-Cong supported by North Vietnamese and the South Vietnamese held together and supported by the United States. The South Vietnamese Catholics (about 10 percent of the population), property owners and business interests in the large cities are the strong anti-Communist supporters of South Vietnam, and are the minority.

AN AMERICAN WAR

We have provided large amounts of military and economic aid, but not military advisers, but

the present administration came into office we did not furnish American troops to help fight their war, until it was apparent they were being defeated. We have gradually taken over the direction of their government as well as their war until now it has become an American war rather than a Vietnamese war. Why go to Vietnam to drive the Communists out when we can't get them out of Cuba, 90 miles from our shore?

The North Vietnamese supplied troops to the Vietcong only after American troops entered the war in large numbers and we commenced heavy bombing of North Vietnam and the Viet Cong. It was then that China and Russia publicly announced they would give all the military and economic aid necessary to the North Vietnamese in order to defeat the U.S. aggressors.

As a result, we now have aligned against us the powerful countries of China and Russia including all the Communist world, with practically no support from the rest of the world in spite of Rusk's and McNamara's recent appeals to NATO. Under these conditions we cannot win. You can not defeat people in a jungle war where the majority is against you and it is impossible to tell your friends from your enemies.

DESTROYERS

We are rapidly destroying the very country we propose to save — South Vietnam — as well as killing hundreds of its men, women and children by our incessant and heavy bombing of the Vietcong. We are adding to the burdens thousands of refugees that we must feed, clothe and house.

What would the situation be if North Vietnam, with the help of China and Russia, should retaliate by bombing Saigon and the other principal cities in South Vietnam? Even if we won the war, we would have turned the country over to them they have no capacity for democracy or self rule.

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